

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TORRANCE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 in the West Annex Meeting Room, Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners Baxter, Greenberg, Love, Reilly*, Uchima, and Chairperson Hays.

Absent: Commissioner Mayeda.

Also Present: Community Services Director Jones, Sr. Business Manager Minter, Park Services Manager Carson, Recreation Services Manager Brunette, and Sr. Recreation Supervisor Kelso.

*Commissioner Reilly arrived at 7:10 p.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved to grant Commissioner Mayeda an excused absence for the May 14, 2014 Commission meeting. Commissioner Baxter seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Baxter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Baxter moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda. Commissioner Uchima seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, MARCH 12, AND APRIL 9, 2014

MOTION: Commissioner Greenberg moved to approve the Commission meeting minutes of February 19, March 12, and April 9, 2014. Commissioner Uchima seconded the motion; roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Mayeda).

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1

Torrance Youth Council members Willy Wang and Debbie Park introduced themselves.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7A. DISCUSS PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE GREENWOOD PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Community Services Director Jones provided background on the item and informed Commissioners that Greenwood Park is the next park scheduled for play equipment replacement. He stated that staff has been working with Dave Bang Associates on a new design from Playworld Systems that meets safety standards and accomplishes the Department's goal of bringing themed equipment back into City parks. He asked residents to consider the themed equipment option and share what amenities are important to them.

Manager Minter described Greenwood Park and stated that notification of this meeting was sent to residents and local homeowners associations. He called attention to supplemental material received after agendas were prepared. He welcomed public input to discuss themed versus traditional equipment, swings, and surface material.

Eric Huber, Dave Bang Associates, representing Playworld Systems, discussed the challenge of meeting regulations and designing equipment that is fun for youth. He showed the two kidney bean shaped playground areas at Greenwood Park that currently utilize engineered wood fiber as the surface. He stated that wood chips are designed specifically for the playground industry and wheelchairs are able to roll on it. He showed design options for a non-themed, traditional type of equipment and a pirate ship theme, with equipment for ages two to five in one area and for ages five to 12 in the other. He stated that themed equipment has fewer slides and is less structured, encouraging more creative play. He noted that swings have to be separate from the play equipment and do not squeak; however, they require more maintenance and take up a lot of space.

Community Services Director Jones stated that every municipality has unique parks with play equipment, such as "Rocket Ship Park" in Redondo Beach, but that Torrance has none. He noted that themed equipment becomes an identity to that location and turns it into a destination. He stated that the cost of themed and non-themed equipment is similar, and noted that staff researched and chose Playworld because it provides the greatest number of themed equipment, durability, and options.

In response to Commissioner Love's inquiry regarding a timeline, Manager Minter stated that they would like the design finalized by mid-summer, with installation anticipated in early fall.

Joanne Kato, Iris Avenue, voiced her support for swings but expressed concern that kids run across the swing zone when going from one area to the other. She stated that mothers at Greenwood Park do not like wood chips because they get stuck in shoes and socks.

Mr. Huber showed an option for both age structures in one area and both age swings in the other area.

Community Services Director Jones stated that wood fiber is the cheapest product for surface material and that they may have to compromise the equipment if they use a different material.

It was noted that wood chips are the standard in all parks and a brief discussion centered on advantages and disadvantages of sand and rubber. Staff pointed out that, if sand is used, ADA regulations require a part of the surface to be rubberized for wheelchair accessibility.

Sally Yuguchi, Fern Avenue, expressed support for shade covering and more park benches. She stated that non-themed equipment focuses more on gross and fine motor skills, balance, and climbing. In response to her inquiry, Manager Minter stated that a preschool program, summer camp/teen camp programs, after school club, early childhood education, and Family Fun Time frequent the park.

Darlene Kalenik, Acacia Avenue, suggested soliciting input from Pediatric Therapy Network and Fern School. She expressed willingness to have less equipment in exchange for a different surface and more shade. She received clarification that there are six different themed options that include space and castle.

Park Services Manager Carson initiated a brief discussion about merry-go-rounds.

Manager Minter stated that there is an unlimited amount of options for playground equipment and it is difficult to get the public to agree on any one option.

Mike Moreno, Fern Avenue, voiced his support for a community meeting and for showing different surfacing options. He stated that slides are important for play value, he would prefer not to have swings, and that the basketball rims need to be tightened.

Commissioner Love recommended that staff schedule a community meeting and invite parents from Fern School in order to solicit more input, and Commissioner Uchima asked staff to bring back options for play surfaces and cost estimates.

Staff offered to arrange an "open house" at Greenwood Park on a late afternoon before summer recess.

7B. APPROVAL OF NON-PROFIT SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES 2012-2013 FINANCIAL AND NARRATIVE STATEMENTS

Recreation Services Manager Brunette introduced the item and requested that the Commission forward its recommendation to approve the Financial and Narrative Statements to City Council for acceptance and filing.

Commissioner Baxter stated that the Grants Committee met on May 14 to review the Financial and Narrative Statements and that all agencies submitted the required statements pertaining to their grant awards prior to the February 28 deadline. He expressed his appreciation to Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso for all his assistance.

MOTION: Commissioner Reilly moved to recommend approval of the Non-Profit Social Service Agencies 2012-2013 Financial and Narrative Statements. Commissioner Greenberg seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Mayeda).

7C. APPROVAL OF INFLATABLE AMUSEMENTS FOR A COMPANY PICNIC

Senior Business Manager Minter presented a request by Toyota Motor Sales for use of inflatable bouncers for a company picnic to be held at Wilson Park on May 28. He noted that the bouncers exceed the size allowed and are a different type than those identified in the Bouncer Guidelines in Attachment A. He called attention to the three proposed amusements pictured in Attachment B. He stated that the event is on a weekday and no other picnics are scheduled for that day. He requested that the Commission approve the exception on a one-time basis so that staff can evaluate the impact these amusements have on the park. He stated that the market is changing continuously and staff needs to determine if the bouncer policy should be changed.

Amy Forte, Toyota Motor Sales, Western Avenue, thanked the Commission and staff for their consideration. She noted that this would be the second company picnic at Wilson Park and expressed appreciation for the facilities there.

In response to Commissioner Greenberg's inquiries, staff stated that oversized bouncers are often requested and explained reasons why it is not possible to put the bouncers in the parking lot, adding that the volleyball court sand pit is a possibility.

Responding to Commissioner Baxter's inquiry, Senior Business Manager Minter stated that the exception would not create any additional liability for the City and that bouncer companies must provide proof of liability insurance.

In response to Commissioner Reilly's inquiries, he stated that normally anchoring of bouncers is discouraged due to impact to the irrigation system but that he would look into it. He stated that standard bouncers are 15' x 15' and the size has been limited due to space restrictions, maintaining that size does not correlate with injury.

MOTION: Commissioner Greenberg moved to approve the request for use of three oversized inflatable bouncers at Wilson Park on May 28, 2014 and to allow this opportunity for staff to consider modifying the Bouncer Guidelines and to present an impact report to the Commission. Commissioner Uchima seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Mayeda).

7D. CITY BUDGET UPDATE

Community Services Director Jones reported that the first Budget Workshop for the second year of a two year budget was held on May 13, 2014. He stated that there was discussion regarding Cultural Arts Center facilities and that agreement amendments for the Batting Cages and Las Canchas Tennis Facility were approved. He encouraged Commissioners to attend the next Budget Workshop on May 20, 2014.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES

8A. FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Commissioner Baxter reported that the Facilities Committee met to develop plans for the annual Parks and Recreation Awards Banquet and will meet again before the June 11, 2014 Commission meeting. He stated that there have been nominations submitted for all categories but that there is still time to make nominations.

8B. GRANTS COMMITTEE
Previously discussed in Item 7B.

8C. OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE No report.

8D. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE No report.

9. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY

9A. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

Senior Business Manager Minter noted that the Administrative Services Division Report for April 2014 was included in agenda packets. He distributed fliers for the Movies in the Park program that is tied with the Library's Summer Reading Program theme "Paws to Read." He informed the Commission that Annie Hume has resigned from Facility Booking and Matthew Schuck has filled the vacancy.

9B. PARK SERVICES DIVISION

Park Services Manager Carson noted that the Park Services Division Report for April 2014 was included in attachments.

9C. RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION

Recreation Services Manager Brunette noted that the Recreation Services Division Report for April 2014 was included in agenda packets.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso discussed after school participation in Earth Day events and ways youth give back to the community.

10. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

10A. Community Services Director Jones informed the Commission about recent Department reorganization of Divisions, noting that Farmers' Market is moving to Cultural Services and Madrona Marsh is moving to Park Services, effective May 19.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:26 p.m., Commissioner Reilly moved to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, June 11, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Meeting Room, Torrance City Hall. Commissioner Uchima seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Hays so ordered.

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Approved as submitted June 11, 2014 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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